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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP INTELLIGENCE REPORT

COUNTRY Germany (Russian Zone)

DATE

SUBJECT The Farmers' Mutual Aid Society

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STATE	WAR	NAVY	JUSTICE

1. The Vereinigung der gegenseitigen Bauernhilfe (VdgB), or Farmers' Mutual Aid Society, is a "non-party, but politico-economic organization, the object of which is to educate the farmers as good democrats."

2. Membership of the Society in the Soviet Zone has reached 400,000, or 60% of the farmers in the Zone.

3. It is divided into 10,282 local societies (Ortsvereinigungen), 128 "Kreis", and 5 Provincial/"Land" committees. The latter are autonomous. Liaison exists between provincial committees and the SMA, and the Central Farmers' Secretariat in Berlin.

4. SPD members are in the majority. The percentages of VdgB committee members are, according to departmental statistics: SPD 46%, Non-party 45.8%, CDU 4.6%, LDP 3.6%.

5. The monthly subscription of RM1 is not sufficient to cover all expenses. The VdgB is charged with a number of public duties, e.g., plans for the cultivation of the land. It is therefore subsidized by the Provinces and Länder. The amount of the subsidies is not yet known.

6. The local societies control a number of concerns, which belong to each particular society. The Kreis and Provincial Committees, and to some extent the Central Secretariat, have a right of disposal (Verfügungsrecht). In the Zone there exist approximately 2,000 machine-hiring stations. By the time of the harvest, this number should reach 3,000. They dispose of 5,121 tractors, 4,217 seeding machines, 10,050 binding machines, 5,547 threshing machines, 8,387 trailer ploughs (Anhängepflügen).

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7. The VdgB also possesses:

530 mills
387 distilleries
427 hothouses
1,843 smithies and repair workshops
1,542 other workshops

The VdgB obtained these at the time of the Land reforms through the dis-
possession of the former owners. Their value is 150 million RM. The
organization has no liquid assets; most concerns are dependent on subsi-
dies.

8. Its relations with the FDGB are friendly. The VdgB is consid-
ered to be for the country what the FDGB is for the towns. Relations
with the Deutsche Landwirtschaftsgesellschaft (DLG), or German Agricul-
tural Society, are close. The DLG is preponderantly for agricultural
scientists, the VdgB for the practical farmer.

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